

# **Louisiana** **CAREERGEAR** **Study guide**

*2003/2004*

**An instructor's reference to  
Louisiana Career Gear 2003/2004**

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## Introduction

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Welcome to the first edition of the *Louisiana Career Gear Study Guide*! This study guide is for those in the position to help guide students along their career path. It will help both teachers and counselors to aid their students in the career exploration process, and is designed to accompany all of the *Louisiana Career Gear* products. In this edition of the *Career Gear Study Guide*, you'll find:

- **Career Exploration**—a variety of information on the importance of career education, myths and facts on career and educational planning, and succeeding at work. Activities in this section include a self-appraisal questionnaire, interest assessments and worksheets to help guide students in researching specific occupations.
- **Monthly Budget**—exercises and tips to help young people with budgeting their monthly income.
- **After High School**—tips on preparing students for the next step after graduation and activities to help students figure out what to look for in a school or training program.

This study guide will help you incorporate our career products into your classroom activities. We must all take an active role in helping young people accomplish their career goals—this could be *your* first step.

If you have any questions or comments about the study guide, we want to hear from you. Please contact the Louisiana Department of Labor, Office of Occupational Information Services at (225) 342-3141 or toll-free at (888) 302-7662.

**“Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you. We are all learners, doers and teachers.”**

-Richard Bach

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## **Career Exploration: Why do it?**

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Career education is a topic that is sometimes overlooked in school curricula, but it is becoming increasingly important. Earlier and earlier, kids are thinking about adulthood and the working world. Self-discovery helps young people to begin narrowing down their career options. For high school students, interest inventories and self-appraisal questionnaires help foster this type of growth. The following are points to consider when preparing to guide students in the career exploration process.

### **Career Education:**

- Motivates young people to stay in school
- Is a good way to teach young people the importance of higher education
- Teaches students how to obtain marketable skills
- Gives students the opportunity to choose career-related coursework that will advance them from high school to post-secondary placement
- Helps students to see a purpose to their studies
- Prepares students to choose careers they are interested in

Overall, the purpose of career education is to provide the tools, resources and guidance students need to decide what careers parallel their personal interests and attributes. Instructors and/or counselors can be very helpful simply by assisting students in planning their high school classes and activities.

## Career Exploration: Myths and facts

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Often, when it comes to career and educational planning, young people get confused about what is fact and what is fiction. The following are myths that you might want to share with your students in order to clear up some of the misconceptions they may have before they begin exploring their options.

**MYTH- You must have experience to find a job.**

Employers often prefer experienced workers, but that is not always the case. Most people are hired for their aptitude or potential, not just their previous work experience. Employers *want* employees to learn and advance within the organization.

**MYTH- Making good grades in high school will guarantee acceptance into a good college or university.**

For better or worse, standardized tests still carry a lot of weight with college admissions board members. Even though good grades certainly *help* a student get accepted in a good school, good grades alone do not always guarantee acceptance into a competitive school. It is also important to have good recommendation letters and successful campus interviews.

**MYTH- A four-year college degree guarantees a good paying job.**

There are no “guarantees” when it comes to the labor market, and there are plenty of jobs that do not require a college degree. Many jobs now require such specific skills that going to a community college or technical school will often increase the chances of finding a good job.

**MYTH- Technical schools and community colleges are for people that cannot afford or are not smart enough to attend a university.**

This is the biggest myth of all. People from all walks of life attend community colleges and/or technical schools. More often than not, people who do attend technical schools soon after completing high school have a good sense of their career goals.

## **Career Exploration:** Self-appraisal questionnaire

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Something that you can use with your students as they begin taking their first step in the career exploration process is the self-appraisal questionnaire provided below. This questionnaire is very similar to the one on page 2 of *Louisiana Career Compass*. Other student exercises throughout this study guide will reference the student back to this self-appraisal.

### **Self-Appraisal Questionnaire**

1. List the school subjects in which you have done well. Did you enjoy these subjects?
2. List any jobs you've held. Which job did you like the best? Why?
3. What are you good at? What do you learn easily, without much help from others?
4. List 15 words that describe your personality. (For example, are you quiet? talkative? organized? creative?)
5. If you could learn any new skill, what would it be? Why?
6. List physical conditions that could help/hurt you on the job.
7. List four jobs that you would like (even if you don't know much about them). What is it about each of these jobs that appeals to you?

## Career Exploration: Assessing your interests and abilities

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Every student has his or her own talents, interests, strengths and weaknesses. Self-exploration is about becoming aware of these qualities. This exercise is designed to help students to learn more about their specific skills, interests and abilities.

### Occupational Interests

List 3 to 5 things you like to do. Don't just think of specific activities such as singing or playing football. Think more along the lines of occupational interests, such as leading a group, making decisions and working with numbers.

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### Work Preferences

List 3 to 5 work preferences that you feel are important in a career. For instance, is it important for you to work alone, outdoors, with computers, or to have a job that involves travel? These are important decisions that you should consider before you decide to take a certain career path.

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### Skills and Abilities

List 3 to 5 skills or talents that you possess. For instance, you might be organized or detail-oriented, or you may manage your time efficiently.

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### Education Preferences

Write down the amount of time that you are willing to train for a job or go to school. (And remember, although most of us don't *think* we want to be in school for another 10 years, your opinion might change as you find out more about the occupations you are interested in.)

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## Career Exploration: Career expectations

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After students have figured out what interests them most and have become more aware of their unique personality traits, skills, and abilities, the next step is to decide what they want in a job. The following is a simple survey (which is also provided on page 3 of *Louisiana Career Compass*) in which students can rank their priorities in a job. This is a good way for students to consider their preferences when they begin planning their career.

### What do you want in a job?

Rank each job characteristic from 1 to 12, with 1 being the **most important** and 12 being the **least important** to you.

- \_\_\_ Good salary and benefits
- \_\_\_ Job security
- \_\_\_ Flexible hours
- \_\_\_ Opportunities to learn new things
- \_\_\_ Sticking to a routine that's comfortable for me
- \_\_\_ Working for an organization whose values are consistent with mine
- \_\_\_ Opportunities to travel
- \_\_\_ Opportunities to be outside
- \_\_\_ Being able to work in teams with other people
- \_\_\_ Having a job with very little stress
- \_\_\_ Working under deadlines
- \_\_\_ Working in a nurturing, supportive environment



## Career Exploration: Taking a closer look at your occupations of interest

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The “Which direction should I take?” article on page 9 of *Louisiana Career Paths* should have helped your students narrow down several different occupations they think are interesting. Now, they should use *The Map* section of that book to answer some of the questions in the table below. This will help them get organized and narrow down their career options for the next exercise.

Name of Occupation	Do I have some of the suggested skills for this occupational group?	What is the job outlook?	What is the wage or salary range?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

**After you have filled out the chart, answer some of these questions concerning the occupations that you chose.**

1. Are the wage and salary ranges satisfying to you? If not, will that affect your interest in the occupation?

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2. What are some of the skills that you have to learn before you will be able to apply for one of these jobs? What type of training do you need to get these skills?

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3. Do any of these careers match some of your work preferences that you discovered in your self-exploration exercises?

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4. List 3-4 reasons why you could see yourself doing any of these jobs in the future.

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## Career Exploration: Getting the facts on one occupation

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By now your students have had an opportunity to narrow their focus to a few occupations. Now it's time they sit down and focus on just *one* career. The following activity is a way for students to research information about one specific occupation. Besides using *The Map* section of *Louisiana Career Paths*, students may also use some of the alternative resources provided on page 79 of that book. Those resources will help students answer some of the questions regarding their chosen occupation.

**Title of Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. List three questions about your chosen occupation that you hope to answer that haven't been answered by *Louisiana Career Paths*.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why are you interested in this occupation?

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3. What are the education and training requirements?

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4. Are there other requirements, such as licensure or certification, for this occupation? If yes, what steps must you take to meet these requirements? (Hint: see the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* at [www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm) or [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net).)

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5. What are the low-end, median, and high-end wages?

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6. What is the job outlook for this occupation?

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7. What are the opportunities for advancement? (Hint: see the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* at [www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm) or [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net).)

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8. List at least three other occupations that are similar or related to this occupation. Briefly describe their duties and responsibilities. (Hint: see the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* at [www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.BLS.gov/oco/home.htm) or [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net).)

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9. Are there job opportunities in Louisiana for this occupation? Are these job opportunities available in the area in which you live? List at least three companies or businesses in your area that are hiring employees for this occupation. (Hint: check out America's Job Bank at [www.CareerOneStop.org](http://www.CareerOneStop.org) or [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net).)

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10. What school subjects or courses would be helpful in preparing for this position?

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11. In this occupation, will you interact with other people a lot or a little? Explain. Is this the work environment you prefer?

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12. Do you have the resources (ability, skills, interest, etc.) to work in this occupation? Why or why not?

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13. Name three educational programs related to your occupation. Remember, these can include classes at private vocational schools, apprenticeship training, or military training. (Hint: this question requires outside research—you can start by using the online resources provided for you on page 79 of *Louisiana Career Paths*, or you can look through the “Colleges and Universities” listings on pages 74-78 of that publication to find web sites of specific schools.)

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14. Find three schools or institutions that offer at least one educational program you listed in question 13. Write down the street address, web site address and phone number for each school.

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15. What’s the total cost of training for each school you listed above? Remember to include estimated costs for tuition, materials, books and supplies. (Hint: this question requires outside research—you can start by using the online resources provided for you on page 79 of *Louisiana Career Paths* or you can look through the “Colleges and Universities” listings on pages 74-78 of that publication to find web sites of specific schools.)

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16. List three resources you can use to learn about financial aid. What are some of the financial resources available to help you pay for the educational training you listed above?

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17. Talk to someone employed in your occupation. If you cannot locate someone, talk to an adult who knows a little bit about the occupation, like a career counselor or family member. Ask him or her at least five questions you still have about your occupation. Record your questions and answers below.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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4. 

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5. 

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## Career Exploration: Success at work\*

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Students also need to realize that the “small things” are important in becoming successful at a job. Of course, they need to know that proper training and experience is a plus for most positions, but personal or “soft” skills that are not always taught in the classroom can also be useful when preparing for a new job or career. Talk with your students about not only the things they need to be aware of when interviewing for a job, but also things they should carry with them until they retire.

1. Be punctual! In other words, show up to work on time. If you know that you are running late, give your supervisor a call to let him or her know that you are on your way.
2. Be dependable. If you say you are going to do something, do it! Nothing is worse than knowing you cannot count on someone to keep his or her word or be reliable.
3. Ask for help! It is ok to ask for help if you truly do not understand something and need further explanation.
4. Don't take all the credit! Acknowledge your co-workers when they have contributed to your good work.
5. Prioritize your work. Making sure the most important tasks are completed first will ensure that you don't miss deadlines. Figuring out what is most important and what's not is also a concern. For example, assume projects or tasks assigned to you by your boss with a specific deadline are of utmost importance.
6. Be proactive, not reactive! In other words, don't wait for a problem to arise before you start thinking about how to solve it. Take the initiative to speak with your supervisor if you see a problem arising.
7. Most of all, remember to be attentive, cooperative and honest.

\*This was adapted from the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, who adapted it from the 1998 Instructor's guide 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Job Savvy: How to Be a Success at Work* By LaVerne L. Ludden Ed. D. & Marsha Ludden, M.A.

## Career Exploration: Put it to the test

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Now that your students have learned how to be successful at work, it is time to put them to the test. Below is a short and fun multiple choice exercise to help generate a classroom discussion about soft skills and how to apply them in the workplace. The questions were designed to make students think about the best way to handle each hypothetical situation. Some answers are not necessarily wrong, but there *is* a “best answer” for each question. The key to this exercise is at the end of the study guide.

**1. You are due at work at 2:00. You’re across town, and you’re running late. You know you won’t make it there before 2:15. What should you do?**

- (a) Call your supervisor and tell her you’re going to be 15 minutes late.
- (b) Don’t waste time calling—just hurry up and get to work as soon as possible so you’re not even later.
- (c) Do nothing—the rule of thumb is to call if you’re going to be *more* than 15 minutes late.

**2. You’re overwhelmed at work. Yesterday, your boss gave you a big job to finish by tomorrow. A few minutes ago, the company owner asked you to help on a project later today. Meanwhile, a co-worker has asked for your help in planning a birthday party for another employee. You know you can’t get everything done in time. What should you do?**

- (a) Start looking for another job—companies that pile too much work on their employees have unrealistic expectations about worker performance.
- (b) Talk to your boss. Communicate to her the demands on your time, and ask if she can help you prioritize what needs to be done.
- (c) Do the company owner’s job first, your boss’ job second, and politely refuse to help your co-worker: birthday parties are inappropriate in the workplace.
- (d) Do the tasks in the order they were given to you.

**3. You discover that some money is missing from your desk. Two of your co-workers told you that they noticed another co-worker poking around in your office while you weren’t there. What’s the best thing to do in this situation?**

- (a) Go directly to that person and ask whether or not he or she took your money.
- (b) Say nothing to that person, but confidentially tell your boss who took your money so that he can reprimand the culprit.
- (c) Report the theft (without mentioning names) to a security guard or supervisor, and lock your desk or keep your money elsewhere from now on.

**4. Your supervisor has given you a small but very important task, but you're not sure how best to complete it. You know that another one of your co-workers has done this before. What should you do?**

- (a) Do the task to the best of your ability without asking for help—employers appreciate employees who don't need a lot of guidance.
- (b) Trade job duties—ask your co-worker to complete your task in exchange for you completing one of his.
- (c) Ask your supervisor how she would like you to complete the task.
- (d) Ask your co-worker how he has completed the task in the past.

**5. You and a co-worker have completed a project together. You each did about half the work. Your boss came to you and thanked you for your work, without ever mentioning your co-worker's name or saying she knew your co-worker was involved. Which of the following is the best thing to do?**

- (a) Give your co-worker most or all of the credit—it is unprofessional to take individual credit for a group project.
- (b) Don't mention your co-worker—it is unprofessional to correct your boss.
- (c) Thank your boss for her praise, and acknowledge that the project was a combined effort between you and your co-worker.

## Monthly Budget: What you *really* have to spend each month

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Once your students have explored their interests and researched their career and education options, they are ready to start thinking about how to prepare for the future in other ways. Whether they will be going to college in the near future, enrolling in some other type of training, or jumping right into the workforce, everyone needs to learn how to maintain a budget. Below is a monthly budget that students can use to stay on the right financial path. Students can begin by estimating what they *think* they will have to work with each month including all sources (wages, parental support, financial aid, etc...). Remember to advise your students to use a pencil so they can make any corrections if their budget needs to be adjusted.

### Budget Exercise

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Median Wage \_\_\_\_\_

The first step is to figure out how much money you *really* have to spend each month.

#### Gross Monthly Income

Gross monthly income is your median hourly wage times the number of hours worked in a month  
=(median wage) X (173) {Use a full-time estimate of 173 hours per month}

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payroll Deductions

Deductions include Federal and State taxes, social security plans and insurance costs  
Deductions typically total 30% of your gross monthly income  
=(gross monthly income) X (.30)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Net Monthly Income

This equals your total take-home pay minus the amount of money for payroll deductions  
=(gross monthly income) – (payroll deductions)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Extra Income

Additional money that you might receive each month besides your full-time or part-time job (e.g., parents may give you money each month, or you may receive a certain amount for student financial aid)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### TOTAL:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_



## Monthly Budget: Breaking it down

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### Budget Exercise Continued

Next, you need to figure out how much money you spend each month. Even though this may be your first time to be responsible for your money, it is important to start thinking about your spending habits now. It can be very tempting to apply for a credit card and max it out in a few months. This is a bad habit to start, and if you don't know how much money you can designate for clothing or entertainment, you will be more likely to spend more than you should. Do your best to determine how much you would spend for each category by using the guidelines below and what you know about your own spending habits. If you are unsure about how much certain expenses should be, ask for help from your parents, an instructor, counselor or older friend who might already be on their own. Play around with the numbers until you are satisfied with the amounts.

#### Housing

Typically, housing takes up about 25% of your monthly income. If you think you'll be renting, you can lower your monthly payment.

\$\_\_\_\_\_

#### Food

Like housing, around 25% of your monthly income is spent on food. If you are single, you can decrease this amount. If you expect to be feeding a family, don't expect to spend any less than \$250 a month.

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#### Transportation and Maintenance

On average, transportation and maintenance costs equal 18% of your monthly income. Of that 18%, approximately 15% goes to paying your monthly car note (depending on the cost of your vehicle) and the other 3% goes to maintenance, which includes gas, insurance, repairs, etc...(Note: If you use public transportation, you can save a lot of money).

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#### Utilities

These expenses include household services like cable, water, phone, electricity and gas.

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#### Savings/Retirement

It is wise to start setting aside money for savings when you are young. There are numerous options for saving money—from opening a savings account at a bank or credit union to investing money. Try to save at least 5% of your monthly income.

\$\_\_\_\_\_

**Clothing**

Think of all of the work clothes, leisure clothes and shoes you buy each month. Typically, clothing costs are 10% of your monthly income.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Entertainment**

Includes money you'll spend on movies, eating out, clubs, etc. Add up how much money you spend in a week on entertainment. Multiply this amount by four to calculate your monthly expense.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**School Payments**

Don't forget to add in any tuition or student loan costs you might have.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Miscellaneous**

These expenses include everything else-like dry cleaning, buying household and cleaning supplies, pet expenses, prescription costs, internet connection, cell phone bills and other miscellaneous expenses that you incur on a monthly basis.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Monthly Expenses**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Monthly Budget: Getting real

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### Budget Exercise Continued

Now that you have calculated your total monthly expenses, it is time to compare that figure with your net monthly income. If your total expenses are greater than your net monthly income, you'll have to figure out a way to adjust your budget so that you spend less money on certain things every month. Adjust your monthly numbers until your net monthly income and total monthly expenses are equal, or your monthly expenses are less than your income.

**Net Monthly Income**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Monthly Expenses**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many times did you have to adjust your budget? Why? Which expenses did you have to adjust? Do you think that you'll be able to live with these adjustments?

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2. Compare your budget with two of your other classmates. Which expense totals are similar and which ones are different?

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3. If you are close to being over budget, look at your miscellaneous expenses and choose one or two things you are willing to do without. If there is nothing in this category you are willing to sacrifice, do you have a back-up plan for if and when you go over budget? If so, what is it (besides asking your parents for money)?

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4. What have you learned about creating monthly budgets from this exercise? What things will you keep in mind when you choose a future career?

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## **Monthly Budget:** How to stay on a budget (tips for saving your pennies)

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If your students are still having trouble adjusting their budget so their net monthly income and total monthly expenses are equal (or their monthly expenses are less than their total income), they might need more guidance on how to cut back on each category of monthly expenses. Regardless of whether or not the amount they spend each month exceeds their monthly income, the following tips on how to stay on a budget are helpful to any student.

### **Housing**

Get a roommate. Not only will you split the rent in half, but you'll also be able to save money on utilities.

### **Food**

Eat in! Even a \$.99 burger at a fast food restaurant is more expensive (and less healthy) than *several* sandwiches that you fix at home. If you have to be away from home at lunch, pack a lunch to bring with you.

### **Transportation and Maintenance**

Ride the bus, carpool, or buy a fuel-efficient car. When it comes to cars these days, bigger may *appear* to be better—but an SUV may cost you a lot more in gas than a smaller car.

### **Utilities**

You can really save money by remembering to turn your lights off when you exit a room in your house or apartment.

### **Savings/Retirement**

This is one place you *don't* want to skimp. Commit to socking away a small amount each month—even if you have to give up a mocha-latte or two.

### **Clothing**

Make sure your clothes are worth their price. If the number of dollars an item costs equals the number of times you think you will wear it, then go ahead and buy it. (For example, if you want to buy a \$40 sweater, ask yourself: will I wear this sweater 40 times? If the answer is no, you may want to put it back!)

### **Entertainment**

Everyone wants to have fun, but entertainment costs can skyrocket if you don't watch your spending. To save a few bucks, go to matinees rather than evening movies (and skip the popcorn).

### **School Payments**

Explore scholarship options—and realize that not all scholarships are based on athletic ability or GPA. Pay your tuition bills on time to avoid late charges.

### **Miscellaneous**

When filling prescriptions, always ask if the medication you need comes in generic. Buy discount cleaning supplies and buy items that you use regularly in bulk.

## **After High School: Visiting schools**

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Now that most of your students have figured out what they want to do after high school, they can now start preparing for the next step. Below is some good information on whom students should talk to on their campus visits, and suggested questions they can ask to become more informed on the prospective school.

### **On your campus visit, you should talk to...**

#### **A professor or department representative from the major or program you'd like to explore**

- What are the academic requirements for this major?
- What kinds of courses are offered in this program?
- How many students are in this program?
- How many graduates have jobs within one year?

#### **A student in your prospective major or program**

- What classes have you taken? Which ones do you like and dislike?
- What other activities do you participate in to prepare for your career?
- What should I do to get ready for college?

#### **An admissions counselor**

- What are the admission requirements for this school?
- How do I apply?
- What documents do I need to provide?
- What are the deadlines?

#### **A financial aid counselor**

- How much does it cost per year to attend this school?
- What financial aid opportunities are there for me?
- What forms do I need to fill out and what are the deadlines?
- What school-specific scholarships do you offer?

#### **Additional questions to ask any student who lives on campus**

- Do you recommend living on campus for the first year of school?
- Are freshmen who live on campus allowed to have cars their first year?
- Are students who live on campus required to purchase a meal plan?

## After High School: What you should be doing now

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Most students in their junior or senior year have already made a decision about whether or not they will attend college or some other type of training program, but have not figured out where they would like to attend. The following are tips for getting prepared for life *after* high school and how to choose the right school to attend. You can share these tips with your students, in addition to the “On Your Mark” article on pages 68-69 in *Louisiana Career Paths*, to help them prepare for all the responsibilities they will face in their senior year.

1. Keep up with your high school graduation requirements to make sure that you will have all of them completed by your anticipated graduation date.
2. Research career possibilities that are of interest to you.
3. Take interest assessments, talk to others and surf the Internet to narrow your fields of interest.
4. After you’ve decided which field or subject you’d like to study, do the proper research, talk to people who are in that specific field and figure out what training is needed. It is also important to learn about the program or department in which you will study. Figure out the strengths and weaknesses of each school’s program. This will help you narrow down your school options.
5. Prepare for and take the required entrance exam(s). Whether it’s the ACT, SAT, or some other standardized test, it is important to take these tests seriously. Preparing for the tests in advance by studying or taking special classes will greatly increase your chances of getting into the school of your choice (especially if your grades are up to par). Also remember to go to your counselor’s office or school career center to get registration materials for the exam.
6. Decide what is important to you in a school: do you want a small, intimate learning environment or would you rather attend a big top ten school? Would you like to be close to home or is it more important to get accepted to, say, an eastern Ivy League school? These are decisions that you need to make in order to narrow down your school choices.
7. Next, rank the schools or training programs you are interested in. Most of all, make sure the schools on your list have the programs you are interested in.

8. If possible, visit all the schools on your list. It is important for you to see the environment in which you might spend the next several years of your life. Visit professors, talk to students on campus, visit with a financial aid officer and try out the cafeteria food.
9. After you have visited all the schools you are interested in, begin the application process for at least three schools. Make sure you type or neatly write your applications in pen and ask someone to proofread your completed application and/or personal statement.
10. If you are going to need financial help, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition, apply for as many scholarships and grants as possible. This process takes time, but the reward is great. The Internet, library, local bookstores and your school's career center are excellent resources for finding all types of financial aid.
11. After you have received all of your acceptance (or rejection) letters, choose which school you want to attend and notify the schools you have rejected.

## After High School: Choosing a school

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By now your students should have a pretty good idea as to what they will do after they finish high school. If college or some sort of training program is a part of that plan, then the final and most important thing to figure out is how to pay for it. Below is a short exercise to help your students identify and locate financial assistance. For the first part of the exercise, students can use the “Before you Sign on the Dotted Line” article in *Louisiana Career Paths* on page 73 to assist them in finding the definitions for some of the terms. Other terms and the second part of this exercise, however, require outside research.

### 1. Fill in the definition for each of the following terms:

Loan\_\_\_\_\_

Grant\_\_\_\_\_

Merit\_\_\_\_\_

Need\_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship\_\_\_\_\_

Work-Study\_\_\_\_\_

	School Choice #1	School Choice #2	School Choice #3
List three of your college choices:			
Check the types of aid the school offers:	Grants  Scholarships  Loans  Work Study	Grants  Scholarships  Loans  Work Study	Grants  Scholarships  Loans  Work Study
What's the deadline to apply for financial aid?			
Whom do you contact for financial aid information?			



**L**AVOS is a user-friendly system housed on the “LAWWORKS” Web site at <http://lavos.lawworks.net> that contains tons of information on education and employment in Louisiana. Here are just a few things that your students can find on the Web site to help them with their career planning process.

- Find a job in any part of the state
- Research colleges and training programs
- Create resumés and cover letters
- Figure out how to finance their education

On the LAVOS homepage students can choose from eight different OneStop services to help plan and achieve their career goals:

- **Career Services** to research occupations or choose a new career through skills matching or the occupational analyzer.
- **Job Seeker Services** to view job openings, build cover letters and resumés and find employer information. The virtual recruiter allows you to search job openings that meet your requirements.
- **Education Services** to find information on training and educational programs.
- **Financial Services** to see if your training plans fit your budget. Financial aid information for training is also available.
- **Community Services** to find out if you meet eligibility requirements to receive services from community benefits programs.
- **Labor Market Services** to view employment projections, wage information, industry and occupational profiles and unemployment rates.
- **Unemployment Services** gives you all the resources you’ll need if you find yourself unemployed.
- **Youth Services** to access a wide variety of information on services for young adults including Job Corps, apprenticeship programs, job shadowing, Youth Opportunity Movement, Youth Build, AmeriCorps and the National Guard Challenge Program.

## Answer Key to the “Put it to the Test” Exercise on Page 14

**Question #1—Answer: (a).** You should *always* call if you’re going to be late. Although taking the time to call might make you a minute or two later than you would have been if you hadn’t called, calling is professional; it lets your supervisor know that you understand you’re expected to be at work on time. Of course, it’s best to keep tardiness to a minimum.

**Question #2—Answer: (b).** Believe it or not, this scenario is a fairly common one—certainly not one to quit your job over! Your boss may not always realize how many projects you’re working on at one time, and may unknowingly give you more work than one person can handle. Prioritizing your work is a skill that you’ll learn as you become more experienced. Often, you’ll be able to prioritize tasks without asking for any guidance from your superiors. When you’re not sure, though, it’s always best to ask. And, while it’s usually perfectly fine to celebrate birthdays or other special occasions at work, it’s important to not let those types of activities absorb too much of your time, especially when you’re busy.

**Question #3—Answer: (c).** It’s always a good practice simply to keep your belongings in a safe place at work. If a theft does occur, simply report it to someone in authority (without mentioning names) and try to be more cautious in the future. You don’t know for sure who took your money, so it’s best not to risk accusing an innocent person. Telling your boss whom you think stole the money could do much more harm than good, and your boss might perceive you as a gossip.

**Question #4—Answer: (c).** It’s appropriate to ask questions if you’re not sure how to complete a task, especially when it’s one you’ve never done before. And, since the task is important, it’s best to ask your supervisor, rather than your co-worker, how to complete it. It’s never a good idea to trade jobs with a co-worker—how do you know he or she will do a better job than you?

**Question #5—Answer: (c).** Of course you can—and should—take credit for a project on which you worked, but acknowledging that you had help is professional and courteous. Your boss will be impressed with your honesty.